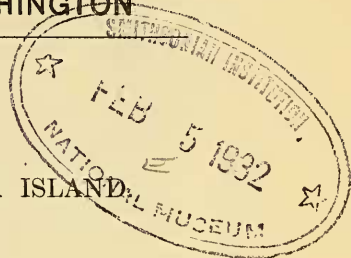


PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

THE GROUND-DOVE OF NAVASSA ISLAND

BY ALEXANDER WETMORE.



The receipt of five skins of the ground-dove from Navassa Island, southwest of Haiti, collected by the Parish-Smithsonian expedition to Haiti, indicates that a distinct form occupies that small island. The new race may be known as:

Chaemepelia passerina navassae, subsp. nov.

Characters.—Similar to *Chaemepelia passerina insularis* Ridgway¹ but grayer, less brownish on the dorsal surface; lighter below; averaging slightly smaller.

Description.—Type, U. S. Nat. Mus., no. 317,212, male adult, Navassa Island, May 10, 1930, collected by W. M. Perrygo (original number 566). Back, rump and upper tail-coverts hair brown; hindneck and posterior part of crown dawn gray, with each feather margined narrowly with deep neutral gray, producing a scalloped appearance; forepart of crown slightly brighter than avellaneous; lesser and middle wing coverts and inner scapulars between vinaceous fawn and fawn color, becoming grayer towards outer margin of wing, the inner feathers spotted with plum purple, the spots having a metallic sheen; concealed portions of primaries and outer secondaries pecan brown; inner secondaries and tips and outer margins of outer secondaries and primaries blackish brown; ninth primary with a very narrow whitish margin on distal part of outer web; sixth to eighth primaries with a narrow margin of pecan brown on outer web; primary coverts pecan brown at base and dull blackish at tips; middle pair of rectrices deep mouse gray; others black with a narrow white edging on outer web of outermost at distal end; chin and throat whitish with a wash of avellaneous; line behind eye vinaceous-fawn; feathers of side of head and sides of upper foreneck pale vinaceous-fawn, with narrow terminal margins of fawn-color; those of lower foreneck and breast blackish basally, with a narrow margin of pale vinaceous-fawn and a very narrow distal edging of fawn color; lower breast and sides between avellaneous and vinaceous-fawn; abdomen dull whitish; under tail-coverts basally hair brown,

¹*Columbigallina passerina insularis* Ridgway, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., vol. 10, 1887, p. 574. (Grand Cayman.)

marginally broadly with dull whitish; under surface of wings Mikado brown. Bill blackish at tip; yellowish brown basally; cere blackish brown; tarsus and toes dull sayal brown (from dried skins).

Measurements.—Males, five specimens, wing 79.6–82.0 (80.9), tail 51.6–57.5 (54.8), culmen with cere 9.8 (10.8¹), tarsus 14.8–16.0 (15.2) mm.

Females, five specimens, wing 76.2–83.0 (80.0), tail 52.4–57.5 (53.6), culmen with cere 11.1–11.7 (11.4²) tarsus 13.8–15.8 (14.7) mm.

Type, male, wing 81.0, tail 55.0, culmen with cere 10.8, tarsus 14.8 mm.

Remarks.—The differences marking the ground-dove of Navassa Island were first observed in examining three males and three females in the collections of the American Museum of Natural History obtained in July, 1917, by R. H. Beck. These skins were in considerably worn dress and after some consideration were laid aside since there was possibility that the lighter coloration was due to wear and fading. The receipt of five skins in unworn plumage taken during work of the Parish-Smithsonian expedition of 1930 substantiates the earlier observations of lighter color and leaves no hesitation in describing this race.

The differences noted are more obvious in females than in males.

Though occasional skins of *C. p. insularis* are closely similar to *C. p. navassae* the average of *insularis* is decidedly darker. It is interesting to note that the variation of the Navassa Island bird is in the direction of *C. p. exigua* Riley from Mona Island in the passage between Porto Rico and the Dominican Republic, physical conditions on Mona and Navassa from available information being much the same.

¹Four specimens.

²Three specimens.